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For Immediate Release

Highlands High School is state champ in *We the People* competition — **Knowledge of U.S. Constitution sends students to compete on national level** —

FRANKFORT, Ky., March 13, 2006 — For the second year in a row, Highlands High School in Ft. Thomas has won the state championship for the *We the People ... The Citizen and the Constitution* civic education competition. The Highlands High team, led by teacher Julie Kuhnhein, prevailed over four other high schools to earn the honor of competing for the national title in Washington, D.C., April 28-May 2.

Highlands' winning team members are Darcie Dressman, Aaron Finnell, Amy Garvey, Michael Georgilis, Shanna Gilbert, Britney Harris, Kelsey Lynne, Joey McGill, Clare Ploucha, Elijah Plymesser, Jasmine Poole, Ben Romito, Heather Scott, Annie Stephens and Caitlin Wills.

The state competition, which took place Feb. 20 at the Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza in Frankfort, hosted five teams that had advanced from the district level — Highlands High School, Lexington Catholic High School, Ohio County High School in Hartford, Phelps High School and Hazard High School.

Secretary of State Trey Grayson presented certificates of achievement to the competitors and praised their efforts at the awards banquet which took place after the competition.

"The *We the People* curriculum helps our young people develop concepts and attitudes that foster responsible citizenship," said Franklin County Family Court Judge O. Reed Rhorer who was on hand to congratulate the participants.

The Kentucky Court of Justice and the Center for Civic Education in California are co-sponsors of the *We the People ... the Citizen and the Constitution* program. This nationally acclaimed civic education program for high school students was created by the Center for Civic Education to promote the history and philosophy of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. Students demonstrate their knowledge by competing in a mock congressional hearing. The exercise requires them to use their understanding of constitutional principles to defend positions on historical and contemporary issues. An entire class must compete, with teams of three to five students making a presentation on each of the program's six units. Students compete before a panel of judges who independently score each unit's performance. The high school with the highest overall score on all six units is declared the winner.

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We the People is one of the many youth-related programs offered through the Division of Law Related Education at the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) in Frankfort. The AOC is the operational arm of the Kentucky Court of Justice and supports the activities of more than 3,400 court system employees, including the elected offices of justices, judges and circuit court clerks. The AOC also executes the Judicial Branch budget.

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